



Timeline

Congress has presented the Partners and the public with a unique opportunity, the chance to plan and design a new national memorial dedicated to the passengers and crew of United Airlines Flight 93. Through the Flight 93 National Memorial Act (Public Law 107-226), enacted on September 24, 2002, Congress required the Flight 93 Advisory Commission and its partners – the Families of Flight 93, the Flight 93 Memorial Task Force, and the National Park Service – to:

- 1.) submit by September 24, 2005, a report to the Secretary of the Interior and Congress containing recommendations on the planning, design, construction and long-term management of a permanent memorial at the crash site.
- 2.) advise the Secretary on the boundaries of the memorial site.
- 3.) advise the Secretary in the development of the management plan for the memorial site.
- 4.) consult and coordinate with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and other interested parties...
- 5.) provide significant opportunities for public participation in the planning and design of the memorial.

In the summer of 2003, the Partners agreed to a planning process for developing the recommendations required by the Act. This process ensures the Partners and the public are involved in decision-making throughout the project and that all mandates for planning a new unit of the national park system are met.

The process grounds the design and management recommendations in a Mission Statement and pursues a design competition and the creation of a management plan concurrently to produce recommendations that are consistent and well-informed. The process offers transparency and provide local residents, the public, and government agencies with many and varied opportunities to actively participate in the creation of this new national memorial.

Establishing A Boundary

Determining the boundary for the Flight 93 National Memorial involved nearly two years of resource and viewshed studies, site visits, computer modeling, as well as deliberation and public input. The Partners concluded that the memorial boundary should include:

- 1) the crash site and adjacent debris field as the most important resources at the site;
- 2) the immediate lands for visitors to view the crash site as well as areas necessary for visitor access and facilities; and
- 3) lands necessary to provide a reverent, contemplative and appropriate setting.

As a result of these collaborative efforts, the Partners recommended a boundary for the new national memorial on July 30, 2004. The Secretary of the Interior approved this recommendation on January 14, 2005. As a result, the total area within the boundary is approximately 2,200 acres, of which approximately 1,355 acres includes the crash site, the debris field, the area where human remains were found, and those lands necessary for visiting the national memorial, as well as lands that would provide access to U.S. Route 30. Approximately 907 acres would comprise the perimeter viewshed around the core visitor lands. These lands would remain in private ownership but be protected with partners through conservation or scenic easements.

Conducting an International Design Competition

The Partners agreed that a design competition open to everyone would be the most inclusive and democratic way to explore designs for a national memorial. The memorial design competition began on September 11, 2004, and was conducted in two stages. The competition was open to design professionals, as well as the public. The competition guidelines challenged the competitors to present concepts for a "memorial expression" that portrays the issues, ideas, and passions contained in the Mission Statement.

On January 11, 2005, the Stage I designs were submitted and more than 1,000 entries were received. All entries were

exhibited for public review and comment in Somerset, Pennsylvania and were photographed and posted on the project website. An independent jury of family members and design professionals recommended five finalists, whose designs were publicly announced on February 4, 2005. The Stage II finalists were requested to refine their designs to fully explain their concepts. Stage II entries were due on June 15, 2005, and were exhibited for public review and comment on the project website and in Somerset, Pennsylvania between July 1 and September 25, 2005. A separate jury of noted design professionals, family members, and community leaders reviewed the public comments and evaluated the designs against the Mission statement. On September 7, 2005, the selected design was announced to the public.

Preparing a Management Plan

The National Park Service prepares a General Management Plan (GMP) for each site to guide decisions on development, resource management, and visitor use for the next 15-20 years. Because such decisions have long-term implications, the National Park Service also prepares an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that accompanies the plan to evaluate and disclose the impacts associated with pursuing various management approaches and to engage the public in the planning process.

Through the GMP/EIS, the National Park Service has evaluated the final design and a required No Action Alternative. This draft plan was released to the public on June 16, 2006 and was available for public review and comment until August 14, 2006. The public was invited to comment on the plan at this project website, at a public meeting in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, that was held on July 20, 2006, and by mail and fax. The National Park Service released the Final GMP/EIS on June 22, 2007. The planning process will conclude in July 2007 with the signing of a Record of Decision by the National Park Service.

Next Steps

With the signing of the Record of Decision, the Partners will have met all of the requirements of the Flight 93 National Memorial Act. The project will then move into the design development stage as the Partners and the design team explore implementation of the design in greater detail. Planning will also begin for the visitor center and how the story of Flight 93 and the events of September 11, 2001, will be told. Based on available funding, the Partners hope to have a ribbon-cutting on the 10th anniversary of the attacks.